

GRATULATE HER

 JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

Vol. 7 No 2

February 1975

Dust of Snow

The way a crow
Shook down on me
The dust of snow
From a hemlock tree

Has given my heart
A change of mood
And saved some part
Of a day I had rued.

- Robert Frost

The Fourth Annual Banquet

TIME: 6:30 P.M.

DATE: February 25th

PLACE: 28th St. Church of the Brethren
Union Ave. & 28th St. Altoona, Pa.

PROGRAM: Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Harpster will be our guests next Tuesday. Mr. Harpster will speak of his life in the out of doors as a naturalist and will show slides of native orchids. He and his wife - the famous science teacher of Altoona High School - Helen Cherry live in the country outside of Port Madilda. They are close to nature there. Mr. Harpster has spent twenty-two years photographing nature and has spent two years as a park naturalist at Black Moshannon.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Definite reservations should be made for dinner by February 21st - a Friday. Everyone should send money to Margaret Chonko at 2316 11th St., Altoona, Pa. It might be good to call her about reservations since a count must be given to the caterers for their planning. Call 942-8070. Send checks.

This will be a fine affair. The latest word is that there will be pie for dessert! So - for an excellent meal - come to the banquet Tuesday, February 25th!

In Memoriam

Two of our great older friends passed away not so long ago. We will miss them. As friends and teachers they will be greatly missed. Dr. Fred Miller helped a lot of us realize just what good nutrition is. He was an old Auduboner from way, way back. His support at our film programs was a real boost for it was impressive to see a man of his age come out faithfully for those programs. Dr. Miller has left the children of Altoona a legacy of apples in an on going nutrition program.

Jim Samuels was our teacher out of doors and from him many of us sharpened our senses - with Jim as our guide into the world of plants. The field trips were some of the most revealing of experiences. It is probable that some who traveled with him will carry on the tradition of nature study for new students coming along. Jim was no doubt one of the most knowledgeable of amateur botanists in Pennsylvania.

These men will be long remembered. Their long, good years of adventure are models for those who seek the "good life!" The Juniata Valley Audubon Society will place memorial books in the Public Library as an honor to them.

Winter Field Trip - March 2nd / 2:00 P.M.

Al Burd will lead a field trip to Sinking Valley Sunday March 2nd. Depending on the weather this should be a good outing for some of the winter birds. Rough-legged hawks are quite unusual but have been sighted here in winter. Horned larks - birds that some members consider to be mythical creations of a long distant and past Christmas Bird Count - can be seen but only under special conditions! And. Snow buntings. Not make believe birds but real - and friends of the horned larks. There are many other possible birds that could turn up - who knows: a snowy owl might be visiting the bird count circle. Meet at Foodland at 2:00 with Al. The group will move from Kettle St.

up through the pass to the valley. Bring binoculars and warm clothing.

Trip to Harrisburg

Mike Chonko and a few others will make a trip to Harrisburg this Saturday, Feb. 22nd to attend the organizational meeting of the hoped for state Audubon group. There are 11 branches or locals in Pennsylvania at this time and it's likely that more will be formed. Upon getting the details of the proposed state organization, Mike will inform our membership prior to deciding formally whether to go along with it. Anyone who wishes to go to this meeting is invited, so call Mike at 942-8070 for information.

Railroad Land

The current furor over the 20 + acres of former Penn Central land shows - and will show - just how broadly the Altoona peoples' wishes register their effect. Will that parcel of land be utilized in such a way as to give a multi-purpose development or will it be again a case of many voices crying out for nothing. It would seem to be quite in order for JVAS to study the matter and possibly to give some input in to the planning now going on. Anyone with ideas on this issue should contact Kurt Gansauer, our Conservation Committee chairman. (942-3837)

Membership Drive

A great chance to win \$1,000 exists for the group in a competition National is sponsoring for new members. Using prize monies donated by a foundation each region can have two winners: one group with the highest number of total new members and one group with the highest percentage of increase in new members. It appears that the last category might be our best bet. The time period for the contest is January 1st to June 30th of this year. Mary Slippey is our Membership Chairman (695-5200) and is already working hard to get the membership drive off and running. Please contact Mary with lead ideas as to how new members can be acquired.

Miscellaneous News

Don Wharton is now writing a column in the Altoona Mirror entitled "Conservation Notes". The Chonkos have 4 pairs of house finches at their feeder this winter. John Orr reports one house finch at his feeder in January. Don Wharton saw a mockingbird at his home in Maple Hollow. The newest committee - a very important one - is the Education Committee headed by Martha Sullivan. A plant sale is planned for sometime in March. This would be a public sale of small house plants as donated by members. Call Mike Chonko (942-8070) if you can give some help on this. Use small containers - paper cups, etc. to pot them. Watch for ducks in late February and March. The reservoirs are the places to go for them. Mrs. Fair reports a red-winged blackbird during the winter and up to January, at her place in Llyswen (an old Welsh neighborhood?) "It Began With Birds", the new Audubon color film that was shown at the November 1974 meeting is available rent free to us and can be bought for only \$100.00. It is hoped that a small fund raising campaign can be started to get this \$100.00 for purchase and if interested please contact Mike Chonko with your contribution. It would be great to have this very nice film in the Altoona Public Library available to many groups. The next executive committee meeting is scheduled for March 14th at the Chonkos in Altoona. All are invited. Bill Murray recommends highly an article on owls in the Pennsylvania Game News of a few issues ago. Read up on owls for we need help in getting them counted at Christmas! Al Richardson has written us a nice and long letter full of description of their new home in South Carolina. John Orr will have this letter at the banquet for anyone wishing to read it. Al's address is: 114 N. Hermitage Road, Beaufort, South Carolina 29902. He would like to hear from his old friends - and - who knows? You might get one of his great letters in return!

The Gnatcatcher
3001 4th Avenue
Altoona, Pennsylvania 16602

Last Minute Note Re Banquet:
Call Margaret Chonko immediately
to reserve your tickets!